

Message Text

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73

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4641

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

UNCLAS GABORONE 1342

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BC, TZ, SF

SUBJ: BOTSWANA PRESS RELEASE CONCERNING ALLEGATIONS OF
GOB SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

REF: A. GABORONE A-111 (NOTAL), B. DAR ES SALAAM 2994
C. PRETORIA 3177

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE GOB PRESS RELEASE OF 6 SEPT
CONCERNING SA ALLEGATIONS OF GOB SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION
MOVEMENTS.

BEGIN TEXT

1. IN THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH HE ISSUED JOINTLY WITH PRESIDENT
NYERERE OF TANZANIA RECENTLY, THE PRESIDENT OF BOTSWANA,
SIR SERETSE KHAMA, REAFFIRMED HIS BELIEF IN "THE LEGITIMACY
OF THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN THE COUNTRIES STILL UNDER
COLONIAL AND RACIAL DOMINATION". SIR SERETSE ALSO EXPRESSED
"FULL SUPPORT FOR THE STRUGGLE THE OPPRESSED PEOPLE ARA
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WAGING IN ALL THE UNLIBERATED AREAS OF AFRICA INCLUDING

ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, SOUTH AFRICA, GUINA BISSAU AND CAPE VERDE, NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE".

2. IT HAS COME TO THE NOTICE OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT THAT THIS POSITION TAKEN BY SIR SERETSE ON THE QUESTION OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIALISM AND RACIAL DOMINATION IN AFRICA HAS CAUSED HYSTERIA IN CERTAIN QUARTERS AND GIVEN RISE TO SPECULATION THAT BOTSWANA HAS CHANGED ITS POLICY TOWARDS ITS NEIGHBORS. THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT HAS THEREFORE FOUND IT NECESSARY TO RESTATE AND CLARIFY BOTSWANA'S POSITION ON THIS MATTER.

3. THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS CONDEMNED THE DENIAL, ON THE PART OF THE REGIMES OF THE WHITE-RULED AREAS OF AFRICA, OF THE RIGHTS OF THEIR BLACK CITIZENS TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND HUMAN EQUALITY. FURTHER, THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS RECOGNIZED THE RIGHT OF THE BLACK CITIZENS OF THESE COUNTRIES TO ACHIEVE THEIR FULL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THEIR EFFORTS TO DO SO. IT IS THE WISH OF THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT THAT THESE RIGHTS SHOULD BE ACHIEVED BY PEACEFUL MEANS, BUT WHERE THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED ITS UNDERSTANDING WHEN THE PEOPLE CONCERNED DECIDE TO RESORT TO VIOLENT MEANS.

4. AS SIR SERETSE KHAMA SAID IN A SPEECH DELIVERED IN UPPSALA, SWEDEN IN NOVEMBER 1970:

"WE DO NOT CONDEMN THOSE WHO RESORTED TO VIOLENCE WHEN ALL OTHER PATHS WERE CLOSED TO THEM. WE RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS THE VIOLENCE OF OPPRESSION WHICH GIVES RISE TO THE VIOLENCE OF RESISTANCE AND LIBERATION".

5. WITH REGARD TO THE KIND OF SUPPORT WHICH BOTSWANA IS PREPARED TO GIVE TO THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLING FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE WHITE-RULED AREAS OF AFRICA, THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS EMPHASIZED THAT IT WILL NOT ALLOW ITS TERRITORY TO BE USED AS A LAUNCHING PAD FOR ATTACKS AGAINST BOTSWANA'S NEIGHBORS. AS THE PRESIDENT PUT IT IN HIS UPPSALA SPEECH:

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ZIN BOTSWANA S EXPOSED AND DEFENCELESS POSITION WE CANNOT ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE USED AS A SPRING-BOARD FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST THE MINORITY REGIMES WHICH SURROUND US. NOR DO OUR BROTHERS IN INDEPENDENT AFRICA AND IN THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS EXPECT THIS OF US."

6. THUS, THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH SIR SERETSE KHAMA ISSUED WITH

PRESIDENT NYERERE INTRODUCES NO CHANGE WHATSOEVER IN BOTSWANA
POLICY REGARDING THE STRUGGLE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN EQUALITY IN THE WHITE-RULED COUNTRIES OF
AFRICA. BOTSWANA HAS ALWAYS RECOGNIZED THE LEGITIMACY OF, AND
EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR, THIS STRUGGLE. HOWEVER, THE BOTSWANA
GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO ALWAYS RECOGNIZED THAT THERE IS A LIMIT
BEYOND WHICH ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIBERATION OF AFRICA
CANNOT GO WITHOUT ENDANGERING BOTSWANA'S VERY INDEPENDENCE.

END TEXT.

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